



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|

10/500,358

06/30/2004

Aki Kobayashi

042276

2290

38834

7590

06/19/2006

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP
1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NW
SUITE 700
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

EXAMINER

CHONG, YONG SOO

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1617

DATE MAILED: 06/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/500,358 | Applicant(s) KOBAYASHI ET AL. | |
| | Examiner Yong S. Chong | Art Unit 1617 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 13-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Application

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/21/2006 has been entered.

Claims 13-18 have been withdrawn. Claims 3-5 have been amended. Claims 1-18 are pending. Claims 1-12 are examined herein.

The previous 35 USC 103(a) rejection is withdrawn due to the amended claims. The following new rejection will now apply.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham vs John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

Art Unit: 1617

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Clarkson et al. (US Patent Application 2001/0036964 A1) in view of Pan et al. (US Patent 6,348,187 A1).

The instant claims are directed to a cosmetic or medicinal composition comprising 1,2-alkanediols and one or more materials selected from the group consisting of thymol, citronella, terpinyl acetate, citronellol, and β -pinene.

Clarkson et al. teach an anti-microbial composition comprising polyhydric alcohol (abstract), where the preferred compounds are 1,2-hexanediol and 1,2-octanediol (section 0065). This composition is concerned with reducing microbial numbers upon the surface of the human body such as underarm or feet, thereby reducing malodour (section 0001), therefore requiring the use of perfumes or fragrances (section 0086). When used on the surface of the skin to fight micro-organisms, the invention is formulated into deodorants (section 0002). In this manner, this composition disclosed by Clarkson et al. reads on both a cosmetic or medicinal composition.

Clarkson et al. teach polyhydric alcohols such as 1,2-hexanediol and 1,2-octanediol, therefore it is obvious to use homologs of those compounds for the same purpose. It is well settled in patent law that the selection of a known material based on its suitability for its intended use is prima facie obvious. See *Sinclair & Carroll Co. v. Interchemical Corp.*, 325 U.S. 327, 65 USPQ 297 (1945). What's more, the prima facie

Art Unit: 1617

obviousness is also supported by the holding that homologs are generally of sufficiently close structural similarity that there is a presumed expectation that such compounds possess similar properties. In re Wilder, 563 F.2d 457, 195 USPQ 426 (CCPA 1977).

Examiner notes that in the absence in the specification as to what exactly is the scope of a "cosmetically and medicinally effective agent," the claims will be interpreted broadly so that the active agent disclosed by Clarkson et al. will read on a "cosmetically and medicinally effective agent."

However, Clarkson et al. fail to teach thymol in the composition.

Pan et al. teach that thymol is a well-known antiseptic compound and is utilized for its antimicrobial activity (col. 1, lines 41-42).

Therefore, it would have been *prima facie* obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the claimed invention was made, to combine the antimicrobial compositions taught by Clarkson and Pan et al. with each other.

A person of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to make this combination because: (1) both Clarkson and Pan et al. disclose antimicrobial compositions and (2) of the reasonable expectancy of successfully producing an effective cosmetic and/or medicinal composition.

"It is *prima facie* obvious to combine two compositions each of which is taught by the prior art to be useful for the same purpose, in order to form a third composition to be used for the very same purpose.... The idea of combining them flows logically from their having been individually taught in the prior art." *In re Kerkhoven*, 626 F.2d 846, 850, 205 USPQ 1069, 1072 (CCPA 1980).

Art Unit: 1617

Claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Clarkson et al. (US Patent Application 2001/0036964 A1) and Pan et al. (US Patent 6,348,187 A1) as applied to claims 1-9 in view of Jensen et al. (US Patent 2,550,255).

The instant claims are directed to a food composition comprising 1,2-alkanediols and one or more materials selected from the group consisting of thymol, citronella, terpinyl acetate, citronellol, and β -pinene.

Clarkson and Pan et al. teach as discussed above, however fail to disclose specifically a food product containing this composition.

Examiner notes that in the absence in the specification as to what exactly is the scope of a "nutritionally effective edible substance," the claims will be interpreted broadly so that the active agent disclosed by Clarkson et al. will read on a "nutritionally effective edible substance."

Jensen et al. teach anti-bacterial agents to be employed as an effective preservative for food products (col. 1, lines 34-56).

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the claimed invention was made, to use the antimicrobial composition as taught by Clarkson and Pan et al. in food products.

A person of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to use the composition taught by Clarkson and Pan et al. in food products because the anti-bacterial properties of 1,2-hexanediol and 1,2-octanediol can be used as a preservatives in food products to prevent spoilage and decomposition.

Response to Arguments

It is respectfully pointed out that a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish from each other. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. In a claim drawn to a process of making, the intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Thus, the intended use of a composition claim will be given no patentable weight.

It is further respectfully pointed out that a preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951). See MPEP 2111.02.

With regard to the argument for synergism, the burden is shifted to Applicant to show clear and convincing factual evidence of nonobviousness or unexpected results, i.e., side-by-side comparison with the closest prior art in support of nonobviousness for the instant claimed invention over the prior art. For the above stated reasons, said claims are properly rejected under 35 U.S.C.103(a). Therefore, said rejections are adhered to.

Finally, with regard to the argument for the non-obviousness of the referenced prior art to use the composition in a food product, the Examiner respectfully reminds

Art Unit: 1617


Applicant that the standard for obviousness is not absolute, but rather merely a suggestion of reasonable success to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yong S. Chong whose telephone number is (571)-272-8513. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, SREENI PADMANABHAN can be reached on (571)-272-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571)-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


SHENGJUN WANG
PRIMARY EXAMINER

YSC